

INSPECTION CONNECTION

Sensory Evaluation 2005

by Michael DiLiberti

Spring and summer 2005 were very busy for the USDC National Sensory Section (NSS). Seven programs were held involving seafood inspectors, industry personnel and academia.

March 16-17, a joint program was held with National Fisheries Institute, and FDA, immediately following the International Boston Seafood Show. This two-day program was at our Gloucester, MA facility. The attendees evaluated a variety of finfish and shellfish, including several species of domestic and imported scallops. The



program facilitators were Dr. Carol Kelly, USDC Sensory Chief, Bob Collette from NFI and James Barnett from the FDA. The harmonized sensory analysts were Carmel Williams, Consumer Safety Officer (CSO), and Len Shanks, Supervisory Consumer Safety Officer (SCSO) from USDC, and James Barnett from FDA. Fifteen industry personnel attended this program including three from Canada.

The previous week, a 4-day specialty workshop occurred in Gloucester for staff training. Len Shanks, SCSO, and Roxy Triplett, SCSO, collaborated with the Sensory Section to conduct a harmonization of evaluation techniques course for inspectors who perform Defense Supply Center Philadelphia (DSCP) Audits. Four inspectors completed in-depth training on five species to expand the ranks of the audit team who evaluate fishery products purchased by the military.

On May 13-16, another 4-day sensory workshop was held at the University of Florida's extension center in Davie, Florida. Nine seafood inspectors from USDC Seafood Inspection attended. The focus for the program was shrimp, scallops and farm-raised catfish. This year we have added one day of training on the U.S. General Fish Fillet Grade Standard. Dr. Kelly again facilitated, program coordinator was Michael DiLiberti, Training Specialist, the harmonized analysts were Carmel Williams, CSO, and Charlie Bostwick, CSO.

A 4-day International Harmonization Sensory Workshop on June 13-16, was held in Gloucester, MA with our counterparts from the Republic of South Africa. Eleven USDC and one South African seafood inspector attended the workshop. Key species for this program were ocean perch, codfish from both coasts, scallops and farm-raised catfish. Dr. Kelly and Michael Young, from the South African Bureau of Standards, led this program. The analysts were Carmel Williams, CSO, and Michael Young. Steven Barusso and Michael DiLiberti, Training Specialists, were the sample managers for the program.

Also in June, the Sensory Section and VA Tech - Seafood Research Center (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University) began a two-year blue crab project. The goal is to train a flavor descriptive analysis panel which will evaluate excellent through decomposed crab meat and determine sensory quality attributes more



clearly. These attributes will be used in industry training in late 2006.

Michael DiLiberti and Dr. Mike Jahncke, Professor at VA Tech, started preparing samples in late June. With these samples Drs. Kelly and Jahncke trained a 6-member panel at the VA Tech, Hampton facility in early July.



A 3-day seafood inspection sensory workshop was held in Gloucester on August 17-19th. This program occurred within a two week staff training in response to Wal-Mart's participation in the Seafood Inspection Program. It was an intense 3-day program with the key species being shrimp, flounder, and Atlantic salmon. The Sensory Section team performed their customary roles, while the sensory analysts were Michael DiLiberti and CSO's Carmel Williams and Scott Phinney. This comprehensive training was conducted with the USDC Training Section and included fundamental topics of sampling, statistics and grade standard procedures.



Near the time of this publication, another industry seafood sensory workshop is convening at our Gloucester, MA facility.

Participation is open to anyone for this 2-day workshop based on groundfish and shrimp. Fourteen industry personnel are expected to attend.

QUESTION CORNER

Q: Does the USDC offer product inspection and certification in Foreign countries?

A: Yes. As of September 2005, USDC Seafood Inspection Program has expanded its auditing program of foreign facilities relative to compliance with U.S. requirements and importers' specifications to provide for product inspection and certification at these facilities.

(For additional information visit our website seafood.nmfs.noaa.gov or email us at NMFS.International.Seafood.Services@noaa.gov)

Continued DSCP Growth and other Expansions

by Brian Lynch

DSCP/Vetcom audits continue at a pace of between 12 and 36 audits per year. Recent CSO additions to the Food Team are: Rohn Robertson, Rodney Platt, Steve Ross and Scott Phinney. Roxy Triplett, SCSO, has assumed Lead responsibilities for DSCP audits from Brian Lynch. Brian served in that capacity for six years, from the inception of USDC participation in DSCP quality audits.

Two new warehouse facilities in the Northeast have contracted for full-time inspection coverage in order that their customers may meet the newly-implemented Wal Mart requirements.

In addition, Third party audits are routinely provided for processors, to fulfill audit requirements for Sysco, US Food Service, Sodexho and Outback Steakhouse.

Analytical Services

by Jane Fox-Dobson

The USDC Seafood Inspection Program includes National Analytical Laboratory Services (NALS) for verification purposes. The USDC inspection and certification of product includes safety/quality criteria that are a critical part of the Program's functions. Periodic laboratory analyses through this surveillance technique are an additional method of maintaining assurances that the Program's participants meet the federal regulatory, importing country, and/or Program's requirements. The costs of product sampling and analyses are being borne by the Program as a necessary aspect of the Program's verification process.

For Fiscal Year 2005, the NALS analyzed 212 lots (1,522 samples) of fish and fishery products. The lots were randomly submitted by the USDC Inspection Services for surveillance purposes. The lots were identified as follows: 46 lots (460 samples) of ready-



to-eat products; 28 lots (280 samples) of fully cooked shrimp; 19 lots (95 samples) of battered/breaded products, 27 lots (135 samples) of raw shrimp; and 92 lots (552 samples) of histamine producers.

The ready-to-eat products and fully cooked shrimp were microbiologically analyzed for Total Plate Count, Total coliform, *Escherichia coli*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Listeria*, and *Salmonella*. The battered/breaded products were microbiologically analyzed for Total coliform, *Escherichia coli*, and *Staphylococcus aureus*. The fully cooked shrimp and raw shrimp were chemically analyzed for chloramphenicol, nitrofurantoin, and sulfite. The histamine producers were chemically analyzed for histamine.

A total of 93 lots (835 samples) were microbiological analyzed. Five lots were confirmed for the presence of *Listeria*, but only 1 lot did not meet FDA's Compliance Program 7303.842 for the presence of *Listeria monocytogenes*. One lot did not meet FDA's Compliance Program 7303.842 for *Staphylococcus aureus*. Two lots exceeded the ICMSF recommended limits for Total Plate Count.

A total of 147 lots (967 samples) were chemically analyzed. Four lots did not meet FDA's zero tolerance for the presence of chloramphenicol. Three lots did not meet FDA's zero tolerance for the presence of nitrofurantoin. One lot did not meet FDA's labeling requirements for sulfite. Three lots did not meet FDA's Compliance Policy Guide Sec 540.525 for histamine.

Out of the 212 lots, 6% (13 lots) were not in compliance with U.S. requirements and 1% (2 lots) exceeded the ICMSF recommended limits.

TRAWLING THE NET

Looking for information on Florida Sea Grant? Visit www.flseagrant.org/program_areas/safer_seafood/



CALENDAR

HACCP Workshops for Industry

The Industry HACCP course is an intense three-day course that covers all aspects of the HACCP concept as it relates to seafood harvesting, processing, transporting, distributing and retailing.

October

18-20 Miami, FL (Spanish)
25-27 Long Beach, CA

November

8-10 Long Beach, CA
17-19 Seattle, WA
29-Dec. 2 Gloucester, MA

December

6-8 Long Beach, CA
13-15 San Francisco, CA

Sensory Evaluation Workshop

An intensive 2-day program that couples an introductory course in sensory science with plenty of hands-on product training with recognized experts. Upon completion, armed with the most efficient tools and training available, you will be capable of evaluating quality of the species and product forms you deal with every day.

November

15-16 Seattle, WA
(Pacific Pollock, Atlantic Salmon, and Shrimp)

March 2006

15-16 Gloucester, MA

Call (978) 281-9381 (Christine) for more information.
Fax number: 978-281-9134



Customer Service

by Monty Berg

I have always viewed the writing of an article for the Inspection Connection as a golden opportunity to communicate with our industry and customer base. It is a time for reflection and prognostication. Reflecting on the past months since the Boston Show your program has been scrambling to augment and train staff in anticipation of the September 1st commencement of inspections for Wal-Mart. I cannot minimize that effort or its success. Your voluntary inspection program has prepared, in 5 months, for the inspections of an additional 100 million pounds of seafood for the benefit of the industry, retail and producer, and the consuming public. We have trained inspectors in place for every facility with which we have commitments and staff ready to move into facilities once they are ready. This could only have been accomplished by a combined effort of every aspect of the inspection program. From headquarters and regions hiring, to field inspectors doing on-site training and classroom training from our training and sensory branches, and supervisors pushing the “newbies” like drill sergeants. We have trained competent people in place to succeed in the task that lies ahead. Looking ahead is quite nice also. We are being contacted by other retailers looking at their own seafood purchasing and we continue to provide requested information and arrange meetings with any company interested in supplying certified product to their customers.



I cannot say that all of this has been well received. There have been some folks pretty upset by these new inspections requirements from the retailers. My only response is that the inspection requirement puts everybody on a level playing field which is what we have been told for years the industry wants. It provides marketing opportunities for foreign and domestic product equally without price advantage created by size, weight, and quality issues. Hopefully, in time, it will create an increased level of consumer confidence that will lead to greater consumption of seafood in our country which we all know is good for us.

There is one thing of which I remain quite certain, if we work together as an industry/government partnership, we cannot fail. And when we succeed together, the consumer, our ultimate customer, benefits. What greater goal could any of us attain?

Ken Aadsen Retires

by Kimberly Young



After 13 years of service with the U.S. Department of Commerce Seafood Inspection Program, Kenneth Aadsen will effectively retire October 27, 2005. He dedicated many years to the Program in various capacities. He started in 1992 as a Consumer Safety Officer in the Western Region. Then, in 1993, he moved east to the Headquarters office, where he furthered his career as a Veterinary Medical Officer and then becoming the Chief of Technical Services in 1999. With enthusiasm and determination, Ken fostered relationships with many international trade representatives and State Department officials. Ken's efforts will be greatly missed.

For questions regarding foreign inspection and trade please email us at NMFS.International.Seafood.Services@noaa.gov.



2006 Trade Shows

Look for the USDC Seafood Inspection booth at the following show(s):

Boston Seafood Show

Boston, MA

March 12-14

Marine Hotel Assn. Show

Naples, FL

April 23-25

European Seafood Expo

Brussels

May 9-11

School Nutrition Association

Los Angeles, CA

July 17-19

Louisiana Foodservice Expo

New Orleans, LA

August 5-7

West Coast Seafood Show

TBA

China Seafood Expo

TBA

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